

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter comprising:  
a ceramic honeycomb structure having a surrounding wall, partition walls provided in a honeycomb pattern within the surrounding wall, and a plurality of cells partitioned by the partition walls and, at the same time, penetrating through from one end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure to the other;  
wherein if a virtual line is drawn on the both end faces of the ceramic honeycomb structure by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 3.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall, not less than 90% of the peripheral area outside the virtual line is blocked with plug material.
2. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein a partial area or the whole area of the opening of each cell through which the virtual line passes is blocked with the plug material.
3. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the ceramic honeycomb structure has the surrounding wall and the partition walls with a porosity of not less than 50%.
4. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the surrounding wall has a thickness of 0.2 to 0.8 mm.
5. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the ceramic honeycomb structure is made of cordierite.

6. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1:  
wherein the exhaust gas purifying filter is one for a diesel engine for purifying an exhaust gas discharged from the diesel engine; and  
wherein in the central area within the virtual line on the end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure, both openings of the cells provided with plug material and openings of the cells not provided with plug material exist mixedly in such a way that they are arranged alternately.
7. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the virtual line is a line drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 2.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall.
8. (original) An exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the partition wall has a thickness of 0.25 to 0.40 mm.
9. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter comprising:  
a forming process for forming a ceramic honeycomb structure having a surrounding wall, partition walls provided in a honeycomb pattern within the surrounding wall, and a plurality of cells partitioned by the partition walls and, at the same time, penetrating through from one end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure to the other;  
a masking process for pasting mask tapes to the entire end faces of the ceramic honeycomb structure;  
a drilling process in which a virtual line is drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 3.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall, and at least the mask tape

pasted to the openings of the cells through which the virtual line passes and the openings of the cells outside the virtual line is drilled; and

a plugging process in which not less than 90% of the peripheral area outside the virtual line is blocked with plug material after dipping the end faces into the plug material paste and forming the plug material in the openings of the cells other than those blocked with the mask tape.

10. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 7~~ claim 9, wherein as for part of the mask tape pasted to the openings of the cells within the virtual line, the part of the mask tape pasted to one of two neighboring openings of the cells is drilled in the drilling process.

11. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter comprising:

a forming process for forming a ceramic honeycomb structure having a surrounding wall, partition walls provided in a honeycomb pattern within the surrounding wall, and a plurality of cells partitioned by the partition walls and, at the same time, penetrating through from one end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure to the other;

a masking process in which a virtual line is drawn on the end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 3.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall and a mask tape is pasted to the central area within the virtual line; and

a plugging process in which not less than 90% of the peripheral area outside the virtual line is blocked with plug material after dipping the end faces into the plug material paste and forming the plug material in the openings of the cells other than those blocked with the mask tape.

12. (currently amended ) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 9~~ claim 11, wherein the drilling process is carried out for drilling at least the mask tape covering the openings of the cells through which the virtual line passes after the making process and before the plugging process.

13. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter comprising:

a forming process for forming a ceramic honeycomb structure having a surrounding wall, partition walls provided in a honeycomb structure within the surrounding wall, and a plurality of cells partitioned by the partition walls and, at the same time, penetrating through from one end face of the ceramic honeycomb structure to the other;

a masking process for pasting mask tapes to the entire end faces of the ceramic honeycomb structure;

a cutting process in which a virtual line is drawn on the end face by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 3.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall, and the mask tape pasted to the peripheral area outside the virtual line is cut and removed; and

a plugging process in which not less than 90% of the peripheral area outside the virtual line is blocked with plug material after dipping the end faces into the plug material paste and forming the plug material in the openings of the cells other than those blocked with the mask tape.

14. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 11~~ claim 13, wherein ~~the drilling~~ a drilling process is carried out for drilling at least the mask tape covering the openings of the cells through which the virtual line passes after the cutting process and the before the plugging process.

15. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter comprising:

a forming process for forming a ceramic honeycomb structure having a surrounding wall, partition walls arranged in a honeycomb pattern within the surrounding wall, and a plurality of cells partitioned by the partition walls and, at the same time, penetrating through from one end of the ceramic honeycomb structure to the other;

a masking process for pasting mask tapes to the entire end faces of the ceramic honeycomb structure;

a cutting process in which a virtual line is drawn on the end face by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 3.0 times the pitch of cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall, and the mask tape is cut along the partition walls of the cells through which the virtual line passes and, at the same time, the mask tape outside the virtual line is removed; and

a plugging process in which not less than 90% of the peripheral area outside the virtual line is blocked with plug material after dipping the end faces into the plug material paste and forming the plug material in the openings of the cells other than those blocked with the mask tape.

16. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 9~~ claim 11, wherein as for the mask tape pasted to the openings of the cells within the virtual line, the mask tape pasted to one of two neighboring openings of the cells is drilled after the masking process and before the plugging process.

17. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 11~~ claim 13, wherein as for the mask tape pasted to the openings of the cells within the virtual line, the mask tape pasted to one of two

neighboring openings of the cells is drilled after the masking process and before the plugging process.

18. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in ~~claim 13~~ claim 15, wherein as for the mask tape pasted to the openings of the cells within the virtual line, the mask tape pasted to one of two neighboring openings of the cells is drilled after the masking process and before the plugging process.

19. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 9, wherein the virtual line is a line drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 2.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall.

20. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 9, wherein the partition wall has a thickness of 0.25 to 0.40 mm.

21. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 11, wherein the virtual line is a line drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 2.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall.

22. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 11, wherein the partition wall has a thickness of 0.25 to 0.40 mm.

23. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 13, wherein the virtual line is a line drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 2.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall.

24. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 13, wherein the partition wall has a thickness of 0.25 to 0.40 mm.

25. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 15, wherein the virtual line is a line drawn by continuously connecting points at a distance of 1.0 to 2.0 times the pitch of the cells in the direction toward the center from the inner surface of the surrounding wall.

26. (original) A method for manufacturing an exhaust gas purifying filter, as set forth in claim 15, wherein the partition wall has a thickness of 0.25 to 0.40 mm.